

X2 reports

X2

1890–1893

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X2's view on Saint-Denis anarchists networks.

PAUWELS

BA 1215 Pauwels, Paris 17 November 1890 X 2 S.D.

Pauwels possesses a reproduction machine ; he uses it to produce circulars and notices which are sent to anarchist companions.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 24 November 1890 X 2

I note below the layout of a manifesto which Pauwels prints in numerous copies by means of his reproduction machine and from XX to be distributed in Saint-Denis.

Pauwels brought the model to Segard on Friday, 22 November in the evening. I was able to copy it textually, but the most elementary prudence prevented me from keeping the original.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 9 December 1890 X 2

Manifesto printed by Pauwels by means of his reproduction machine and handed over by him to Segard on Friday, the 9th of this month, to be distributed only to young conscripts who will soon depart or who will draw lots at the beginning of the year 1891.

To conscripts: [manifesto follows]

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 9 December 1890 X 2

Pauwels has changed residence but still lives in the same street, not far from his former home.

He received a letter from Chévenin, in prison in Grenoble. Chénevin expresses the desire to draw closer to his friends through a transfer which he believes possible to Saint Pélégie.¹

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 9 January 1891 X 2

Pauwels said in a conversation that efforts must be made to rouse the mass of indifferent people from their mutism.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 26 January 1891 X 2 S-D

Pauwels, anarchist from Saint-Denis, attended the meeting at Opéra square on the last 23 January.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 12 February 1891 X 2

Pauwels, residing at 23, street of the Port in Saint-Denis, received a letter from Tennemin² who is in prison in Grenoble.

¹ Sainte-Pélagie was a prison in Paris.

² Alexandre Tennevin (1848–1908), then imprisoned in Grenoble (likely the 'Chévenin' or 'Chénévin' mentioned earlier), was the founder of the League of Antipatriots. The misspellings of his name reflect X2's distance from, or

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 16 February 1891 X 2

Pauwels attended a meeting of the anarchists of Saint-Denis.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 2 March 1891 X 2

Pauwels attended the meeting held last night at the Lepreux room by the anarchists of Saint-Denis.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 9 March 1891 X 2

The anarchists of Saint-Denis gathered Saturday evening at 8:30 P.M., 26, Hélyar room, in the street of the Port.

Companion Pauwels proposed organizing a circle of social studies, with the aim of instructing comrades who desire to study the beautiful anarchist theories and embrace their cause. In these circles, or groups, each person would say their thoughts : if the thought was good, it would benefit all, if it was bad or lacked clarity, it would be discussed until the correct solution was found.

Moreover, by this means, one would acquire a quantity of arguments with which to refute bourgeois absurdities.

Pauwels received the approval of the comrades, and his idea was adopted.

He then spoke a few words on militarism, which must be overthrown by any means whatsoever. Propaganda in this regard must take on large proportions, not only in speeches but also in writings. It is recognized as necessary to distribute newspapers, manifestos, and revolutionary brochures to soldiers: 'It is thus', he added, 'that we made adherents within the 199th Regiment'.

However, if a revolution were to occur, we must not overly delude ourselves or place too much reliance on the army's assistance. It is possible that those whom we consider sincerely convinced might experience a moment of fear or weakness. Perhaps, at the outset of the fight, terrified by the officers with their braid, they would behave like the unconscious ones : they would fire upon us.

Certainly, I hope for the exact opposite, but wisely, we must foresee everything. I conclude by saying that the best propaganda against the military state is the call to desertion.

CLICHY AFFAIR

BA 43, Paris, 9 March 1891

Some time before May 1st, a few anarchists from Saint-Denis, such as Segard, Pauwels, Broeke, etc., upon whom the police are keeping watch, will disappear : that is to say, they will go into hiding so that, should anything occur, they may lend their assistance to the comrades.³

unfamiliarity with, this militant, whose exact name he was unable to provide.

³ Preparatives for the Cichy affair ?

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Saint-Denis 3 April 1891 X 2

The manifestos of which the correspondent sent a XX will not be distributed, but posted throughout all the streets of the city, under the care of Pauwels, who will immediately go into hiding afterward.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 6 April 1891 X 2

Pauwels was among the anarchists gathered, about forty in number, at 94 Paris street in Saint-Denis. A comrade asked whether one should fill out census forms, Pauwels replied that, as far as possible, it was necessary to evade them, just as one must evade all other laws, since anarchists recognize none : one must live, as much as one can, putting into practice the maxims and theories advocated.

BA 44, 3 May 1891

Segard, Bastard, Decamps (who, is believed to be dead) were at the Clichy-Levallois brawl. The day before yesterday, around 4 P.M., Segard came to report the day's events to his wife and immediately left again to avenge his friend Decamps. He was armed to the teeth.

During the Clichy affair, Segard fired upon gendarmes and police agents. Today, Saturday, he has not yet appeared at his residence.

Companions had a meet up last evening at 6:30 P.M., street of the Port, they will all gather in Levallois to resume the hostilities of the previous day. They will try to procure phosphorus but for what purpose ? I do not know. If the anarchists see that there is no way to accomplish anything, they will wait for the opportune moment. When the troops have withdrawn, at factory closing time, they will mass-march toward police stations and elsewhere.

I obtained this information from one Prevost from Reims, currently in Saint-Denis, whom I mentioned in a previous report. I will be kept informed of developments and will inform you immediately.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 4 May 1891 X 2

Pauwels is in Argenteuil.

BA 77, 5 May 1891

I have just learned that the protest in Grenoble was led by the anarchist Sébastien Faure, who, at a meeting held very recently in that town, nearly got torn to pieces.

In Nancy, the anarchist Hamlin must have been one of the organizers of the demonstrations.

I tried to find out whether the dynamite cartridge left on Berri street, at the Duke of Trévise's residence, was the work of revolutionaries. According to their statements, they had nothing to do with it : if they had participated in this attack, they would be the first to boast about it among themselves.

Decamps, who was at the Clichy affair, was arrested under the name Dubois.

Segard must have been dismissed from the gasworks at Le Landy, what is sure is that he has not yet returned home.

The events in Fourmies, Lyon, etc., have thrown the anarchists into a state of excitement impossible to describe. They should be watched very closely, for they speak of nothing but reprisals. Nevertheless, they rejoice at the outcome of the troops' confrontation with the demonstrators, because they hope that in the future similar events will recur and give them the opportunity to boldly throw themselves into the revolutionary path.

I hope to obtain further intelligence tomorrow.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 5 May 1891 X 2

Pauwels is in Argenteuil, 11, little street of l'Église. Tonight or tomorrow, he will depart for England. He was at the Levallois skirmish and fired shots at the police agents.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 11 May 1891 X 2

Pauwels and Segard are in London. They departed on the 5th at 8 in the evening from Gare Saint-Lazare. They are at the following address :

Pauwels at Richard's, grocer, 67 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. Pauwels is supposedly said to have left alone for London; in a postcard written to his wife, he pretends to be unaware of what became of his companion Segard, all with the aim of throwing the police off his back. But I know for certain that they are together.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 16 May 1891 X 2

The anarchist Boutteville housed Pauwels for some time, to whom he handed over a trunk containing all the compromising papers and objects he could have had from street of the Port. In this chest, among other things, there was approximately half a pound of fulminate, 50 to 60 meters of cord to which, in the event, a fuse would have been attached. Boutteville burned everything. There was also a plaque inscribed with the words 'Death to the Exploiters' ; this plaque disappeared since. On May 1st or 2nd, Boutteville carried the trunk to Paris and hid it in a cellar at La Presse, beneath a pile of engraved portraits representing general Boulanger. Only one individual working at La Presse and myself know these details.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 1 June 1891 X 2

Pauwels wrote to his wife; he gives news of the companions. He himself, Pauwels, is XXX of XXX XXX. He does not like London and says that once he has earned a little money, XXX to go to Spain.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 1 June 1891 X 2

Pauwels is in London, he sees Louise Michel every day.

BA 44, Paris, 9 June 1891

Decamps continues to deny the presence of Segard and Bastard at the Clichy affair, I affirm that they were there and that they fired shots.

BA 77, 10 June 1891 (unsigned)

It appears that for some time now, anarchists have been receiving dynamite cartridges from England.

Thus, Mrs. Segard received from her husband and Pauwels about ten cartridges, and Viard, who regularly receives parcels or crates from across the Channel, was the recipient of these cartridges and handed them over to Mrs. Segard.

Moreover, Viard might well be Mrs. Segard's lover, for she is of loose morals. In any case, it is certain that since her husband's departure abroad, this woman has been sheltering Guerlinger and Voyer, two dangerous militants. Guerlinger is her official lover and shares Mrs. Segard's bed. Now, the individuals known so far as authors of the Levallois-Perret explosion would be Ricois, Guerlinger, and Voyer. This explosion is the signal for analogous events that will soon occur. And Joseph Moreau said last Saturday at the meeting in Horel's room that one day he would blow up the Levallois police station along with the commissaire and the officers. Next Sunday in Montmartre, it would not be surprising if dynamite also played its part in the revolutionary socialist counter-demonstration.

BA 139, 11 June 1891

I went yesterday to Saint-Denis with the aim of obtaining the information you requested : I encountered no one capable of enlightening me. Today I saw Mrs. Segard and several companions, here is what I learned :

The anarchists of Saint-Denis took no part in the attack committed at Levallois-Perret, but they are delighted by it. Their only regret is that the two sleeping officers did not get blown up. In acting as they do, they have a purpose : they believe Mr. Constans will become frightened and will not dare to condemn so severely those currently imprisoned at Mazas. It is not the small fry, they say, that must be struck, but the head. From now on, they will foment constant riots in order to better prepare a major blow ; the Levallois affair did not succeed, but with patience and perseverance, they are convinced they will reach their goal.

Here is Catty's true address: 27, Brunel street. He sent eleven francs to Mrs. Segard, three francs for herself, three francs for Madame Decamps, and five francs for the latter's husband, who at this moment lacks everything.

Gauthier went to Agresti, who handed him a coat for Lefevre and a pair of shoes for Rousseau. These two individuals are at Mazas.

A newspaper is currently appearing under the title '*L'Insurgé*' (it is of an extreme violence).

Pierry wrote to Mrs. Segard, he is still in London and does not encourage the comrades to come there, for misery there is even greater than in Paris.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 14 June 1891 X 2

If you wish to be sure of Segard's residence in London, have a search conducted at Pauwels' wife's home in Argenteuil, or at the home of Mr. Lardon, his father, on Cours Ragot in Saint-Denis. She alone receives the letters, she probably does not destroy it, at least I believe so. It is she who carries news to Mrs. Segard.

BA 139, 17 June 1891

Police Station of the Saint-Denis-Sud District

I have the honor of informing Mr. the Prefect of Police that, yesterday evening, in execution of warrants issued by Mr. Coutourier, investigating judge, relating to a case pursued against Guerlinger, Voyez, and other individuals accused of destruction of a building, I carried out raids at the residences of Mrs. Segard and of the named Guerlinger. By virtue of an arrest warrant issued by Mr. the investigating judge, I arrested the named Guerlinger, whom I found at Mrs. Segard's residence.

At this woman's home, I found only two letters originating from the anarchist Decamp, detained at Mazas, one letter from the anarchist Hamelin, refugee in Reims, one postcard from the anarchist Voyez Émile, residing at 8, Michelet street in Levallois, and one postal parcel receipt issued in the name of Hamelin. I seized some documents.

Mrs. Segard, entirely devoted to the anarchist cause, daily receives at her home individuals engaged in propaganda. She remains on guard, knowing she is under surveillance, and it would be very surprising if anything of interest were found at her residence. Moreover, she had already been alerted by the recent visits of plainclothes officers gathering information in the neighborhood.

Aside from a few anarchist brochures and newspapers, I found nothing of interest at the residence of the named Guerlinger.

Since the named Voyez is the subject of an arrest warrant issued by Mr. Coutourier and entrusted to the Sûreté service, I sent his address by telegram to the administration yesterday evening.

The police commissaire,

Beloumino.

BA 139, 17 June 1891 (unsigned)

It is confirmed that Ricois was present with Voyez and Guerlinger in the attempted explosion at the Levallois police station.

Moreover, on 24 May, following the demonstration at Père-Lachaise, these three individuals, gathered at 92 Ménilmontant boulevard with their political coreligionists, pledged to take revenge for the events of May 1st and to avenge their wounded companions.

It was then that they thought of procuring dynamite, and Mrs. Segard consulted with Viard to obtain some through the intermediary of her husband.

She wrote to England, and Viard, upon receipt, handed over the cartridges he had received to Mrs. Segard, who was waiting for them.

The anarchists of Levallois, more serious and more convinced than their Parisian comrades, are preparing another strike against the Levallois police station, but their exact plans remain unknown for now.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 23 June 1891 X 2

Pauwels is still in England but not in London. XXX

BA, 1215 Pauwels, 3 July 1891 X 2

The agents went to conduct a raid at Mrs. Pauwels' residence to find correspondence from her husband. As usual, they were extremely clumsy : the letters were on a table, hidden under a rug, they touched them twenty times over without noticing. As soon as they left, Mrs. Pauwels burned them. Her husband is in Birmingham.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, 21 July 1891 X 2

I have just learned that Pierry has returned from England : he is in Saint-Denis and is visiting Mrs. Segard. Pauwels is in Paris, in hiding. I will know his exact location tomorrow or the day after, and will inform you immediately.

Segard intends to return to France and get himself arrested, he prefers incarceration to life abroad.

Grandidier was at Alterant's on Sunday evening : the anarchist elite attended, among them Martinet, who is going to take him to a deputy, probably his protégé Jaluzot, to obtain an extension of his stay in France.

Voyez and Guerlinger are in Saint-Denis.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 24 July 1891 X 2

Pauwels was hiding at companion Reclus's place : it's rumored that he has been arrested, I do not know whether this fact is accurate.

All manifestos, printed materials, etc., inciting revolt, are produced at Reclus's. The manifesto in support of Decamps is to be launched in the coming days; the anarchists claim that if Decamps, Dardare, and Leveillé are sentenced to death, a riot, and perhaps even a revolution, will immediately erupt.

One Sicard, from Paris, came to bring Mrs. Segard money collected at a meeting.

The Great Matthieu⁴ advises Pierry and other anarchist conscripts to perform their military service. As for himself, he no longer wishes to attend meetings : he claims one can carry out good propaganda without them.

Martinet⁵ came to Mrs. Segard's at 11 in the evening to announce that he had just obtained from Mr. Constans authorization for Alterant to remain in France.

BA 77, 25 August 1891

As I have already said, the anarchists intend to attend Decamps trial, if, after the verdict, the aforementioned is taken back to Mazas, they plan to surround the vehicle and attempt to free him.

Viard asked a certain Mr. Bonnami to serve as a defense witness for Decamps. This person promptly refused. But Heurtaux and two bourgeois individuals I do not know have agreed to

⁴ Gustave Mathieu (1866–1948) was an illegalist and anarchist. He was deeply involved in Ravachol's bombings the following year. He managed to flee and successfully evade capture by the authorities before being acquitted.

⁵ Pierre Martinet (1848–1919) was a 'big mouth' of the movement at this period, inspirer of European individualist anarchism and police informant, hence his relations with Constans, Minister of the Interior.

testify in Decamps favor. Last Saturday, Viard presided over the group's meeting, nothing particular occurred. Around 9:30 to 10 P.M., the anarchists went to the meeting organized by the strikers : they expounded their theories and carried out as much propaganda as possible. I am closely following the anarchists' activities and will keep you informed of everything I learn.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 29 September 1891 X 2

Pauwels was reportedly expelled from Luxembourg. His wife has returned to Saint-Denis, he is expected to join her.

BA 77, 18 January 1892 X2

The anarchists of Paris and the suburbs have arranged to meet tomorrow in Saint-Ouen to attend Viard's funeral. Several speeches will be delivered, I have been told the black and red flag will be displayed.⁶ By tomorrow evening, Wednesday at the latest, I will know what impression the companions had.

When news of L  veill  's arrest reached Saint-Ouen, Bastard immediately went to Duaty's, who said very little about it. Here is what the anarchists think : they declare L  veill  's arrest utterly ridiculous, claiming this companion is innocent of the act attributed to him, and denounce it as yet another infamy by the police, which seeks to destroy them all. Nevertheless, they appear very upset by this arrest, which might suggest that if L  veill   was not directly involved in the Clichy affair, he could perhaps be implicated in another, or was on the verge of carrying out something equivalent, I will likely learn more in the coming days : I am actively investigating this matter, and will inform you as soon as I know.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 28 January 1892 X 2

Pauwels has not given any news for some time. We wait for it daily. He passed through Chaumont (XX Marne).

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 10 February 1892 X 2

A collection has just been made for Pauwels, who is reportedly in dreadful misery. It is hoped that an exact address will be obtained within the next few days.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris 13 February 1892 X 2

A raid was conducted these past days at Pauwels residence : that is, at his wife's parents' home in Argenteuil.

Monday I am going to Saint-Denis for the conscription lottery. I will write to you in the evening.

⁶ The French wording is unclear, as it refers both to a single black and red flag (singular) and to black and red flags (plural).

RAVACHOL

BA, 1132 Ravachol, 16 March 1892

Note from correspondent X2

I received at my home yesterday evening at 7:15 only the enclosed telegram. Mrs. Fédée had sent it to me via her sister, but we crossed paths en route, so I could not get hold of it until 8 P.M..

I returned immediately and communicated it to Mr. the Prefect, you had already left. I will of course go to the meeting, and will make only a brief stop to report to you the confidence they wish to share.

This appears serious.

Your devoted and respectful,

Fédée

BA, 1132 Ravachol, 16 March 1892 X.2 SD Paris

Yesterday, the 15th of this month, correspondent X.2 S.D. had the opportunity to go to Saint-Denis, 12 Thiers square, to Chaumartin's residence, where, during a conversation with this man's wife, who appeared highly agitated from being drunk, the following was learned :

The Saint-Germain bombing was carried out jointly by the aforementioned Chaumartin, his wife, and one of their cousins, known so far only by the first name Léon,⁷ residing in Saint-Denis, where the laboratory is presumably located in which the explosives and poisons mentioned in a previous correspondence — same number, dated 12th of this month — are manufactured.

After taking their formulas from the *Indicateur anarchiste*, they made a mixture of dynamite and another explosive powder, which they packed into an iron pot, topped with pieces of sheet steel, metal shavings, etc.

Léon and Mrs. Chaumartin departed for Paris by tramway : she carried the explosive pot between her legs, hidden under her skirts, to avoid inspection at the city gate. It was Léon who entered the building on Saint-Germain Boulevard : to act more effectively, he wore a comfortable overcoat, a top hat, gloves, and held a cigar in his mouth. He easily slipped through the slightly ajar building door, climbed the first few stairs, lit the fuse with a match he had just struck, and placed the explosive device at the door of the apartment he believed to be occupied by Mr. Benoit, counselor at the court. He exited without attracting any more attention than upon entry : he claims, moreover, that he saw no one in the concierge's lodge. He rejoined Mrs. Chaumartin, who was waiting for him nearby on the boulevard, and barely had they reunited when the explosion occurred.⁸

⁷ This report is the one that denounced Ravachol, undoubtedly the most important report filed by informant X2, and one of the most significant informant reports in French history. X2 knew Ravachol only indirectly, under the alias *Léon Léger*, while other informants/groups knew nothing about him and the police were actively searching for him. It was X2 who guided the authorities toward the anarchist.

⁸ Unlike what occurs during the trial, where Rosalie Soubère takes responsibility for transporting the bomb, X2 is categorical : according to him, Clotilde Chaumartin, wife of Charles Chaumartin, who later betrays the group during

They sought revenge against Mr. Benoit, whom they say presided over the assizes during the sentencing of companions Leveillé, Decamps, and other anarchists from Reims.

Thus, according to them, will magistrates and officials who harass them be treated.

If, as this morning's newspapers announce, raids are undertaken, a pause may occur, but within the coming week, the Prefecture of Police might well receive a visit from the anarchists with their explosive apparatus. The Élysée Palace is being reserved for later.

I will send you Léon's description, whom I am to meet Friday at Chaumartin's, and perhaps also his address, which must be on Île Saint-Denis.

The attack committed at the gendarmerie barracks in Saint-Ouen must be their doing, though this was only hinted at indirectly.

Regarding the Lobau bombing, it is not believed to be attributable to the Saint-Denis anarchists.

Be patient, and above all, no imprudence : I alone know the fact I am signaling to you, and if I were suspected, not only would reprisals be terrible, but you would lose a precious auxiliary.

I will write to you Friday evening or Saturday morning, and if necessary, will arrange a meeting to speak in person.

BA, 1132 Ravachol, Paris, 18 March 1892

Reading the newspapers this morning, I learned of Chaumartin's arrest and was frightened by the consequences it might have for me. Indeed, the day before, I had received from this anarchist's wife the revelations you are already aware of. Nevertheless, since appearances had to be preserved and I could not allow myself to be suspected, I went to Chaumartin's residence that afternoon.

I was received by Cookie, who, along with Mathieu, never leaves the apartment and watches everything that occurs there : they sleep and eat on the premises. Not a word, not a gesture escapes them, and whenever Mrs. Chaumartin goes out into town to do her shopping, she is followed at a distance or even accompanied by one of them, preferably Cookie.

At the time of my arrival, she was in Paris, having gone there with her father and Mathieu to see the investigating judge handling her husband's case.

Thus, I spoke only with Cookie.

You will understand that I feigned the most violent indignation, protesting with all my strength against Chaumartin's arrest, declaring it ignoble to arrest people over a matter of principles, without evidence, without plausible motive, in short, everything one says in such cases.

Cookie certainly participated in the Saint-Germain bombing as well : when one mentions it to him, he sketches an enigmatic smile that gives much to think about. And if you handle the matter well, you may compel him to account for his whereabouts during the evening of the 11th, which will be difficult for him. I believe he will invoke no other witness than Chaumartin himself.

the proceedings, is the anarchist who carried the bomb. If X2 is correct, this means Soubère assumed responsibility for the act in order to exonerate her companion. This interpretation is supported by certain articles in the press of the time, which claim that during the trial, Soubère took responsibility after conferring with Clotilde Chaumartin, in order to spare her, as a mother, from being separated from her children (Soubère didn't have any). The Chaumartin couple betrayed their companions later on during the trial.

On this subject, if possible, please arrange for Mr. the investigative judge to ask Chaumartin and his wife, for the time being, no questions whatsoever regarding the attack of the 11th.

As for Léon, whom I mentioned to you, whom I have not yet seen, and about whom I have only very vague information, he does indeed reside on Île Saint-Denis, enjoys a certain degree of comfort, and possesses, in the premises he occupies, a laboratory and experimental workshop admirably organized. He is already of a certain age, and it cannot possibly be established, as you thought, any identity between him and Chenal, whom I know.

Tomorrow, the 18th, I am to see Mrs. Chaumartin, who has invited me to lunch and will confide in me, unless Mathieu and Cookie remain present. But in that case, on Saturday I will take her to my mother's house, where I will invite her to lunch in turn : there, as we will be alone, I will obtain whatever I wish, I assure you of this.

The rest, of course, will be your responsibility.

What draws my attention, and what somewhat astonishes the population of Saint-Denis, is that, according to newspapers, a very substantial sum of money was found at Chaumartin's residence during the search, stored in a small chest.

This anarchist works as a salesman for Claparède : reportedly, he earns 10 to 12 francs per day (thus, he is an exploiter, not an exploited), but even so, it does not seem plausible that he could have large savings at home, given that he lives very lavishly and receives many guests.

You would do well to have the residences of Mr. Letellier and Mr. Marius Martin placed under surveillance, they were involved in drafting the bill concerning dynamite attacks. Something is likely being prepared against them.

Tomorrow, Friday, between 6 and 7 P.M., wait for me at Gare du Nord, in the Pas-Perdus room, in the section facing the Denain boulevard, I will tell you what I have learned. We will make arrangements for Saturday, and I believe that by Sunday morning, holding all the moral proofs of the conspiracy, you will be able to act.

As for material evidence, I believe you will encounter no great difficulties. The concierge of the building, who is easy to question, can tell you indeed at what hour, on the evening of the 11th, she saw Chaumartin and his clique leave. At the tramway depots, you can likewise determine which tram carried them to Paris, identify the conductor, the driver, or other potential witnesses who may be questioned.

I will provide you with physical descriptions, reference points, and specific questions to ask, which will facilitate the investigation. And since Mrs. Chaumartin is not very strong-willed, she is evidently the one who can be made to confess first. Finally, you will have the results of the searches, for which I will beforehand supply you with precise information, unless unforeseen circumstances, which I do not at all anticipate, cause my plan to fail.

BA, 1132 Ravachol, Paris, 19 March 1892

Last night at 7 P.M., as agreed, correspondent X2 was met at Gare du Nord in a state of absolute discouragement.

Here is what he recounts :

He went around 11 A.M. to Mrs. Chaumartin's to have lunch, bringing his share of provisions : but contrary to his expectations, he was received in the coldest manner, almost with suspicion.

When conversation began, the correspondent asked Mrs. Chaumartin for news of her husband, what she thought of his case, etc.

This woman replied while watching him very closely : ‘I went to see the investigating judge to ask him why my husband had been arrested, and I was greatly surprised when the judge asked me the following question: ‘What were you doing in Paris on the evening of Monday the 11th? At what time did you take the tramway, and at what time did you return?’

‘At first taken aback,’ Mrs. Chaumartin said, ‘I regained my composure and affirmed to the judge that on that day, I had not left my home in Saint-Denis.’

Then, still addressing the correspondent, she added : ‘To you alone did I confide what you know. I certainly do not suspect you of having denounced me to the courts or the police : but you must have chattered carelessly. I am now resolved not only to speak of this affair to no one else, but also to lock my door and receive no one whatsoever.’

‘It is very good advice I was given last night, and I shall follow it. Moreover,’ she added, ‘neither Chaumartin nor I can be incriminated. There is no evidence against us : and if you ever repeat what I told you in court, I will energetically deny it. Besides, I do not believe you capable of doing so’.

As for Léon, as soon as he saw arrests and raids beginning, he promptly crossed the border.

The correspondent continued : You understand that, faced with such a reception and such an attitude, it was no longer possible for me to ask further questions. I would have risked compromising everything. And if, though it seems very difficult today, it becomes possible in a few days to extract new revelations from Mrs. Chaumartin, we must proceed with extreme caution.

In my opinion, it is now necessary to arrest Mathieu and Cookie immediately, so that they are no longer constantly present in this woman’s home, keeping her under tight surveillance.

Perhaps then, left to herself, and especially if Chaumartin’s detention is prolonged, she might yield some new indications.

As for me, simple prudence dictates that I avoid setting foot there for a few days.

Incidentally, I jokingly asked Mrs. Chaumartin how she managed to carry the explosive pot beneath her skirts without risking tipping it over, unless it was sealed with a lid, which would have been dangerous.

Mrs. Chaumartin deflected the conversation, steering it toward another trivial subject, adding : ‘Please, do not speak to me of that anymore, I wish to forget it. I still tremble at the thought.’

I do not believe the concierge of Chaumartin’s building is in a position to affirm whether she saw them leave or not on the evening of the 11th, for the simple reason that her lodge is situated in the middle of the building, between two exits, one opening onto Thiers square, the other onto Nicolas Leblanc street, too far apart to be observed simultaneously.

BA, 1132 Ravachol X2, 3 April 1892

We have received the two telegrams : thank you for notifying us of Mrs. Chaumartin’s release. We have no fear. If we see her, which is unlikely, this woman is very proud so she will not return immediately to Saint-Denis, but will instead settle at her mother’s, we will not lose our composure.

It would be advisable to place her under surveillance regarding her movements and activities. It is probable, if not certain, that Mathieu will go to see her, or that she will go to him to report on the interrogations she underwent. This method might well succeed in capturing the said Mathieu. Surveillance day and night, especially at night.

We know that Chevalier was a close friend of the Chaumartins and visited them very frequently. We are convinced this individual knew of the dynamite stored at their home, and many other things besides. I will try to obtain more detailed information about him.

BA, 1132 Ravachol, 6 April 1892, X n°2

The few anarchists seen Monday in Saint-Denis said that Mrs. Chaumartin reportedly told Mrs. Decamps she suspected me of having denounced her. Mrs. Decamps gave her a sharp rebuke ! She urged her to refrain from such remarks, adding that unlimited trust could be placed in me, whereas the same could not be said of her. These remarks were made before Mrs. Chaumartin's arrest.

The anarchists no longer wish to see or hear mention of Mrs. Chaumartin, they cannot find harsh enough words for her. They claim the police released her after charging her with maintaining, as far as possible, good relations with the companions, with the aim of finding out what they think of recent events and what they plan to do in the future, and that, in reward for the services she may render, she will be paid generously.

Segard almost admitted he knew Ravachol, Béala, and all those accused in the recent attacks. He laments that these brave anarchists were betrayed, he curses the Chaumartins, without them, he says, nothing would ever have come to light. But he adds: 'Others remain to continue the work of destruction; we have everything we need to succeed. Whatever the obstacles, we will break them; we will reach our goal. We will be more prudent, more discreet—and above all, more cruel.

We will begin by eliminating all members of the press, police officers without distinction, deputies, etc.' If we are to believe him, we will soon witness strange things. We will monitor this closely, despite their so-called prudence and discretion, we will manage to make them talk, without appearing to do so.

Mrs. Decamps, at the time of Mrs. Chaumartin's arrest, allegedly facilitated G. Mathieu's escape. If he took refuge in Brussels, he is no longer where he was last year. The woman who supposedly sheltered him, and others, is no longer in Belgium : she now lives maritally with Berthault, who resides in Lille or its surroundings.

As for Chevalier, I learned that he worked with Chaumartin on the vehicle found in the small workshop on street of the Port, he knew Ravachol and others and was aware of their plans.

Segard is very surprised he has not been disturbed.

Upon leaving Mazas prison, where he was detained, Hamelin came to see Segard. He claims he nearly converted the guard stationed at his cell door into an anarchist. This guard supposedly asked him for his address, or gave him his own, in order to communicate with him, receive newspapers, etc. Is this true ? I do not know, but Hamelin affirmed it.

BA 139, Paris, 26 April 1892 X2

I have read the news of the Véry restaurant bombing.⁹ I am not surprised : Gustave Mathieu, being so well-informed about Ravachol's activities and the locations where he hid his devices, and now being at arge, one had to expect what has occurred.

He is the only anarchist I know who is capable of replacing the man who will soon be removed from society, and he will surely replace him to the very end, he will carry out the work of destruction he had planned together with his accomplice.

Tomorrow, we will investigate the effect Ravachol's verdict has produced, and try to determine where Mathieu G. might currently be.

BA 78, 26 April 1892 X2

The anarchists are either no longer able, or no longer willing, to remain in shock, and appear to wish to remain calm for the moment.

There is little coming and going at Segard's. Only Mrs. Decamps, Leveillé, and Charlot occasionally visit him.

Bastard is working in a polishing workshop in Paris. He intends to rent a room there, so as to remain undisturbed in case arrests are carried out around May 1st.

Guerlinger, Pierry, and Segard may withdraw to Argenteuil during that period.

MURDER OF THE LITTLE PASTRY CHIEF AND LATER REPORTS

BA 139, Paris, 29 April 1892 X2

Mrs. Segard and Mrs. Decamps are delighted by the attack on Magenta boulevard [ie the Véry bombing]. The morning after the explosion, as early as 6 A.M., Mrs. Decamps was already at Mrs. Segard's : both women were animated and deep in conversation when someone arrived to inform them of the catastrophe.¹⁰ They appeared surprised, but Mrs. Decamps turned pale. Surely, she was aware of the affair and had come to report on it to her friend. Both know where Mathieu is : Mrs. Segard claimed that he is in Paris and will take great care not to leave it, since he feels in absolute safety there.

⁹ The Véry bombing targeted the establishment whose owner and a waiter had denounced Ravachol, whom they had recognized, to the police, leading directly to his arrest. On the eve of the opening of Ravachol's band's trial, the restaurant was bombed, killing the owner in the process. Contrary to what informant X2 claims, who operated primarily within anarchist circles in the northern districts of Paris, evidence suggests the attack was carried out by Théodule Meunier, with the assistance of Jean-Pierre François and Fernand Bricout. These three militants are never mentioned by X2 and appear to have been entirely unknown to him — his intelligence is thus of very poor quality there.

¹⁰ As in many other instances throughout his reports, X2 demonstrates remarkably deep access to female circles, a very rare situation in police sources of the period, a situation partly explained by the assistance of his mother, but also because he is very close to Marie-Louise Mécrent, spouse of Philogone Segard, the Mrs. Segard he constantly mentions and who stands as one of his primary surveillance targets.

As I have already told you, there is strong reason to believe he is the author of the Magenta boulevard bombing, and it seems to me this is not his last act.

Mrs. Decamps leaves home every day. Upon returning from her outings, she comes to confer with Mrs. Segard, at whose home all the fanatical women of Saint-Denis gather. What are they discussing ?

Would it not be urgent to discreetly place Mrs. Decamps under surveillance ?

She has stated that someone came to offer her 1,000 francs and her husband's pardon if she would reveal Mathieu's whereabouts. She refused.

Bastard has left Mérée ; he must be in England.

It has been reported to my parents that agents have said serious raid are to be conducted at their home, as they appear to be favoring anarchists. This would cause serious harm to their business. They are willing to assist the police by providing information, but above all, they wish to be left in peace.

Ravachol reportedly placed a bounty of 1,700 francs (proceeds from theft) on the heads of the Chaumartins.

A big dinner is planned for next Sunday at their home to celebrate the husband's return.

The anarchists have reportedly sworn to 'do' the Chaumartin woman.

BA 139, Paris, 5 May 1892 X2

Segard and the other companions are more anarchist than ever.

From conversations held with the anarchists of Saint-Denis, one conclusion emerges with deep conviction : Mathieu is in Paris; he is the principal, if not sole, author of the explosion at the Véry restaurant, and he harbors the intention to continue terrorizing the bourgeoisie by occasionally surprising them with sudden attacks. He will not leave France until he has exhausted all the devices left to him by Ravachol.

The letter published by *L'Éclair*, purportedly written by him and sent from London, was in fact written in Paris and forwarded to a companion in London, who then sent it back to Paris, all in order to lose police investigations.

Segard is delighted by the way the guards at the Prefecture and Mazas treated the anarchists. They had never before shown them such consideration. He is convinced these good fellows are becoming anarchists themselves.

The anarchists laugh at the bourgeoisie's fear; they say one must strike while the iron is hot, that the moment to act has come, and that they must seize the opportunity.

Brille & Bastard are regarded as informants, it is claimed the police have bought them, but the companions hope they will know how to accept the police's money while simultaneously outwitting and deceiving them.

I will actively, but with the utmost prudence, endeavor to uncover any possible culpability of Mathieu in the Véry bombing.

BA 139, Paris, 2 June 1892 X2 S.D.

I have the name of the young mechanic who works at the cannon factory, friend of Brille, close to Bastard, and who is reportedly attempting to manufacture bombs. His name is Blondeau/Bloudeau or Londeau/Loudeau, he certainly bears one of these two names.

Berthault, who came to Paris these past days, has just left on foot for Amiens. From there, he will head toward the North. He left his luggage with a fanatical but little-known anarchist in Saint-Denis. This man, who is Italian, has taken the name Bertrand. I believe he runs a wine shop near the new church, the one in the parish district of the town. I will obtain his exact address soon, in the meantime, please try on your side to gather information about him.

This individual is capable of anything; 'he is a man of action', they say. He hosts many visitors, especially traveling companions, Italians mostly. It is at his place, some years ago, that Segard reportedly met Pini.¹¹ By the way, the anarchists affirm that if in Venice is no longer in Paris, he was here very recently. Some claim to have seen him and spoken with him.

Bastard hopes to find work in the surrounding area, to avoid indiscretion and evade police pursuit, he will tell no one where he is employed. But he has already revealed the following : Last Sunday, he reportedly went to that location to meet the person handling his placement. He was very well received and even laughed heartily with Charlot, with whom he took a cold bath in the Seine. It would therefore be within the Seine department that he is working.

Bastard intends to repeat his visit next Sunday (unless he changes his mind). Could you not have him followed ? He will go on foot, the journey takes three hours. Meanwhile, I hope soon to discover this mysterious location, the need to talk will prove stronger than his will to remain silent.

Mrs. Decamps is no longer in Saint-Denis : she is working at the slaughterhouses of La Villette.

Chaumartin has been sentenced to death by the anarchists of Saint-Denis, wherever he may take refuge, they swear they will find him and 'settle his account' (verbatim expression).

Some companions from Saint-Denis attended the meeting held at the Trade room, it was at this meeting that Tortelier reportedly became so violent, crying out: 'Long live Dynamite! Long live Fire! Long live Revolution! etc...' The companions found him sublime.

BA, 1056, Paris, 10 October 1892 X 2

The La Briche victim frequently visited Alterant. The person who was heard affirming this is very well placed to know. She added that the victim deposited his savings with this same Alterant, and that Alterant 'did him good' (sic). It is indeed correct that Bisson came approximately three weeks ago to Segard's.

BA, 1056, Paris, 11 October 1892 (Fédée)

I have the honor of reporting to Mr. the Government vice-president, that, very likely, today at 4 P.M., I will be in a position to provide all necessary information regarding the murder of the individual whose body was recovered in Saint-Denis, reportedly named Bisson or Dubuisson.

Upon receipt of the enclosed telegram, I went this morning at 9:30 A.M.. to meet correspondent X 2, who gave me the following account :

Mrs. Alterant, who has long been on bad terms with the Segard couple, came to their home these past days, twice in succession, to discuss the affair in question. There, she encountered Mrs. Heurteaux, who, being very talkative and curious, attempted to draw confidences from Mrs.

¹¹ Vittorio Pini (1859–1903) was one of the principal founders of illegalism, an anarchist tendency that influenced the Saint-Denis groups to which Segard belonged. During this period, Segard and his wife were regarded as among the main figures in those groups.

Alterant. The latter, whose anxiety appears very great, refused to say anything for now, but she strongly urged the Segards and others present not to tell anyone that she and her husband knew Dubuisson and that he had been received in their home.

Moreover, it has been learned that, a few days after the crime, and this day must have occurred long after payday at Christophe's, almost on the eve of the next payday, Alterant made excessive purchases and expenditures, which drew the attention of shopkeepers and neighbors.

Finally, when it was pointed out to the correspondent that, if, as suspected, the murder had been committed at the victim's home, it would have been simpler to dump the body into the canal near Alterant's residence rather than carry it to the sluice and Claparède workshops under the Seine—that is, at least 300 meters away, the correspondent replied : 'On the contrary, this was very clever ; it diverted all suspicion that might have fallen on neighbors living along the canal, whereas at the spot where the body was recovered, one could easily believe it had drifted downstream from Saint-Ouen or Clichy'.

Moreover, concluded the said correspondent, by 4 P.M. this evening, I will be able to give you a definitive confirmation. Certain comings and goings observed at Alterant's house lead to the belief that he is on the verge of fleeing.

The peace officer,

G. Fédée

BA, 1056, Paris, 11 October 1892, X2

Correspondent X2, whom we have just met, is increasingly convinced that Alteran is either the principal accomplice or the actual perpetrator of the murder of the individual known as Dubuisson, and bases this assessment on the following details :

On a Friday in September, most likely the 23rd, though this cannot be affirmed with certainty (and this day was the eve of payday for Alteran's employer), this man, who until then was always short of money and only purchased supplies on credit month by month, reportedly went to the consumers store on Ursulines street in Saint-Denis and placed an order for wine, liquors, and other goods, paying for them in cash. Now, at that time, not only could Alteran not possibly have had money in advance, but he must still have been in a state of absolute financial distress, since he was working at the Christophe factory only one or two days per week (a strike having already begun there), and, moreover, he supports a very large family. This is a fact easily verifiable and supports what was stated this morning.

On another note, yesterday, the 10th of this month, at 5 P.M., Mrs. Heurteaux, who does not precisely sympathize with the Segard couple, whom she had ceased visiting nearly a year ago, came to see them, and fragments of the following conversation, relating to the murder, were overheard :

'They've got three of the murderers, but they haven't caught the fourth yet, and if I wanted to make Mrs. Alteran pay for the nasty things she's often said about me, today would be the perfect time, because I know a great deal about them'. (It is understood, of course, that these remarks would not be able to be confirmed in a judicial inquiry without exposing the correspondent)

In Saint-Denis, Alteran's neighbors almost openly accuse him of the crime.

It is known that Bisson or Dubuisson frequently visited the Alterans during the week going from September 18 to 25, and met there with Segard and Heurteaux.

Attention has been paid to the means Alteran could have used, without leaving obvious traces, from his home to the spot on the Seine where the victim's body was discovered. It is presumed the body may have been placed in a sack or some kind of wrapping, then loaded onto a wheelbarrow and transported to the aforementioned location.

Alteran must own a wheelbarrow, the wagon he occupies is situated in the middle of a large plot of land which he cultivates.

It is even possible that, if excavations were carried out there, the very sack or wrapping in question might be discovered.

Should investigations be undertaken, it would be essential to proceed with the utmost discretion so as not to compromise the correspondent's position.

X2

BA 1056, S.D.* 12 October 1892 X2

Nothing new was learned yesterday evening or this morning regarding the Buisson affair.

The same behavior continues as in previous days : immediate purchase of newspapers as soon as they come, whispered conversations among the Alteran and Segard households, and the male and female anarchists who visit them.

Always the same mysterious airs and the same anxiety each time an unknown person appears in the neighborhood.

BA, 1056, Paris, 20 October 1892

It is certain that Bisson was very closely connected with the majority of the anarchists in Saint-Denis, and that not long ago he spent two nights sleeping in Bastard's house, in the son's bed. Regarding the Bisson affair, Mrs. Heurtaux, during a conversation, affirmed that if the investigation were properly conducted, a large number of anarchists would find themselves compromised. To this, Mrs. Segard, greatly angered by these words, responded that she had a very malicious tongue and could make people believe that all the anarchists had been involved in the affair.

BA 78, Paris, 13 January 1893 X2

The anarchists are very pleased and laugh heartily at the security measures taken against them last Tuesday. They say that when they wish to act, to carry out a new attack, they will take great care not to speak of it beforehand. They will strike when affairs have calmed down, when everything seems peaceful, at the moment least expected, but never when eyes are fixed upon their movements.

The posters reading 'Death to Thieves' were made in Montmartre : according to what I heard, they were conceived and drafted at Segard's or Bastard's. In any case, even more violent ones will soon appear.

It would be wise to spy Bastard and Segard and place them under close surveillance, as their behavior and manner of operating seem suspicious.

One never knows exactly where they are going, it's always in the opposite direction from what they claim. They serve as couriers for the companions : they fetch posters from region to

region, deliver all messages to groups or individuals. Given these circumstances, they are always armed. They are informed of everything; nothing is foreign to them.

Segard, especially, is in Paris almost every day ; sometimes he does not return home at all.

It appears Chaumartin is working in Pantin, watch out for him; some companions are prepared to 'remove him from society', or at least to 'put him out of commission' quite thoroughly.

BA 78, Saint-Denis, 7 July 1893 X2

The anarchists are delighted by the recent riots and wonder whether a few well-placed bombs might not 'do well in the picture'. (sic)

If Forest is condemned, they swear they will avenge him, not in words, but in deeds.

There continues to be much coming and going at both Alteran's and Segard's homes.

It is believed something is being prepared ; recent events have awakened the companions, who unanimously declare they will succeed.

During the brawl, Segard remained at home, some companions imitated him, so as not to attract attention.

Bastard went out, but claims he saw nothing.

BA 78, Saint-Denis, 30 September 1893 X2

Last night, an individual who has just left the Clément house at Les Bernes departed for London. This companion is a former soldier, a mechanic very closely connected with Bastard. He hopes to find employment in London, if his hopes are disappointed, he will return immediately to Paris.

A certain François is expected at Segard's, he is coming from the Provence region. Details learned about this individual will be communicated to you.

A few comings and goings, but insignificant.

Overall, there is complete calm for the moment, but the companions claim this will not last. They are waiting for events to unfold.

BA, 1215 Pauwels, Paris, 6 October 1893 X 2

The anarchist Pauwels is reportedly said to have come recently to the outskirts of Saint-Denis, only to leave again immediately. It is more likely that he is hiding there, his wife, through Martinet, is supposed to be requesting the Minister of the Interior to revoke the expulsion order. Pauwels is a Belgian national.

Bastard appears singularly occupied at the moment : he runs about in every direction and frequently goes to Paris.

Nothing leaks out regarding what occurs during the secret meetings held at Segard's, they lock themselves in and take unnecessary precautions.

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X2
X2 reports
1890–1893

Archives of the Paris Police Prefecture — courtesy of Archives anarchistes (<http://anarchiv.fr/>)

Reports by informant X2 within the anarchist circles of northern Paris (Saint-Ouen, Saint-Denis, Levallois-Perret, Clichy). The informant, who operated alongside his mother, penetrated deeply into the anarchist milieu of these towns, even as these groups were highly radical. X2 was a key witness to a series of events, notably, he closely spied on Désiré Pauwels (who died in 1894 while carrying out the Madeleine bombing), and was a significant witness to the Clichy affair and the murder of the Little Pastry Chief. Above all, he is known for being the informant who denounced Ravachol, a pivotal event of a period soon to be called the Ère des attentats ('Era of Attacks') by the press, and which led to the execution of the anarchist. X2 was also a privileged source on the anarchist women's circles of the time, revealing their centrality, often overlooked in contemporary police records. While these women are difficult to trace in historical sources and their actions rarely visible elsewhere, X2 gives us a view on them as active, central figures whose role in anarchist activities could not be minimized; on the contrary, they appear essential to the events described in his reports.

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